

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 FEA-01 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DLOS-06 DOTE-00 EB-07

EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 INT-05 JUSE-00 NSF-01

OES-06 OMB-01 SAL-01 /137 W
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P R 110831Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8816

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

:CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6215

JOINT STATE DEFENSE MESSAGE

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, KS, UR, XE, US

SUBJECT: ADMIRAL GAYER CALLS ON PRESIDENT PARK

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT PARK INTERRUPTED HIS VACATION TO RECEIVE ADMIRAL GAYLER. MOST OF THE MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO A REVIEW BY ADMIRAL GAYLER OF THE US MILITARY PRESENCE AND POSTURE IN THE FAR EAST AND TO RESPONDING TO PRESIDENT PARK'S QUESTIONS CONCERNING RUSSIAN NAVAL POWER AND THE TRANSIT PASSAGE OF STRAITS. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH HE RETURNED TO SEOUL EARLIER THAN ANTICIPATED, PRESIDENT PARK IS STILL ON VACATION. NEVERTHELESS, WHEN HE HEARD THAT ADMIRAL GAYLER WAS IN COUNTRY, HE REQUESTED THAT THE ADMIRAL PAY A CALL ON HIM. THE ADMIRAL DID SO
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ON THE AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 10 ACCOMPANIED BY THE CHARGE

AND GENERAL STILWELL. SINCE THIS WAS AN EXCEPTION TO THE RULE THAT THE PRESIDENT RECEIVES NO ONE WHILE ON VACATION, NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE.

3. THE PRESIDENT THANKED ADMIRAL GAYLER AT SOME LENGTH FOR HIS SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO THE ROK ARMED FORCES WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE MODERNIZATION PROGRAM. HE ALSO NOTED THAT HE WAS VERY SORRY THAT GENERAL STILWELL WAS RETIRING, BECAUSE THE GENERAL HAD BEEN SO INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPING A MUCH MORE SOPHISTICATED DEFENSE STRATEGY.

4. ADMIRAL GAYLER REVIEWED THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE FAR EAST. HE NOTED THAT THE ROK'S SITUATION WAS NOW IN GOOD SHAPE AND THAT THE FIP WAS DESIGNED ALONG SOUND MILITARY LINES. HE HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE ATTITUDE THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WAS EXHIBITING, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT THE US HAD TO REMAIN ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. HE SUMMARIZED BRIEFLY THE READINESS POSTURE OF THE US FORCES IN THE PACIFIC.

5. THE ADMIRAL CONCLUDED HIS TOUR D'HORIZON BY STATING THAT HIS MAIN CONCERN WAS WITH THE RUSSIAN NAVAL AND AIR EXPANSION. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE USSR WAS SEEKING ADDITIONAL BASE CAPABILITIES IN THE PACIFIC, WHILE MAINTAINING A FORMIDABLE FACILITY IN SOMALIA. BUT HE NOTED THAT THE RUSSIANS ALSO MAKE MISTAKES; FOR EXAMPLE, THEIR NEWEST AIRCRAFT CARRIER, KIEV, WAS NOT, IN HIS JUDGEMENT, A VERY GOOD CARRIER. HE SUMMARIZED HIS VIEWS BY STATING THAT THE US MILITARY POWER IN THE PACIFIC WAS ADEQUATE FOR ANY TASK IT MIGHT BE CALLED UPON TO DO.

6. THE PRESIDENT NOTED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE STRENGTHENING THEIR NAVAL FORCES IN THE PACIFIC AT A VERY RAPID RATE. HE ASKED ADMIRAL GAYLER TO EVALUATE THIS DEVELOPMENT. THE ADMIRAL SAID THAT HE FOUND THAT A VERY DIFFICULT QUESTION TO ANSWER SINCE EXPERTS WERE REACHING DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS. HIS OWN VIEW WAS THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE INTERESTED IN BUILDING UP THEIR MILITARY POWER IN ORDER TO EXERCISE POLITICAL INFLUENCE. HE DID, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT SEE THE USSR BEING INTERESTED AT THIS TIME IN ANY HOSTILITIES. IN ANY CASE, THE UNITED STATES WAS DETERMINED NOT TO BE SECOND IN STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES OR IN NAVAL STRENGTH.

7. THE PRESIDENT THEN ASKED WHETHER THE HEIGHTENED RUSSIAN NAVAL ACTIVITY IN THE SEA OF JAPAN WAS SHOW OF FORCE VIS-A-VIS JAPAN OR AN EFFORT TO INTIMIDATE THE US

NAVY. GAYLER RESPONDED THAT SHOW OF FORCE MOTIVE COULD NOT BE DISCOUNTED. THE ONE THING HE COULD ASSURE THE PRESIDENT WAS THAT THE US NAVY WOULD NOT BE DETERRED FROM PERFORMING ANY OF ITS TASKS BY RUSSIAN NAVAL EXERCISES. IN HIS VIEW, THE MOST LIKELY REASONS FOR THIS ACTIVITY WERE TECHNICAL TEST OF NEW EQUIPMENTS AND TRAINING IN CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS REMOTE FROM HOME BASES.

8. THE PRESIDENT NOTED THAT THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT WAS VERY CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE LOS CONFERENCE, WHERE A GENERAL AGREEMENT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN REACHED ON A 12-MILE TERRITORIAL SEA. HE NOTED THAT THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE SOUTH KOREAN MAINLAND AND CHEJU ISLAND IS ONLY 23 MILES. THE PASSAGE OF SOVIET WAR SHIPS THROUGH THESE WATERS COULD CAUSE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. ADMIRAL GAYLER RESPONDED THAT THE US HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT THERE SHOULD BE UNIMPEDED PASSAGE OF WAR SHIPS THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS; WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THIS POSITION CREATES LOCAL DISADVANTAGES, IT IS OUR VIEW THAT THEY ARE OFF-SET BY THE LARGER INTERESTS OF THE FREE WORLD. THE ADMIRAL SAID THAT HE PREFERRED NOT TO ELABORATE FURTHER SINCE THIS ENTIRE MATTER WAS UNDER ACTIVE NEGOTIATION IN NEW YORK.

9. THE MEETING CONCLUDED WITH RENEWED THANKS BY THE PRESIDENT FOR THE ADMIRAL'S ASSISTANCE AND HELPFULNESS. STERN

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